



Rough Rider Roundup



Newsletter of the 204th SB

Volume 1, Issue 2,

Commander's Corner

Hello Rough Riders.

Time again for another battalion newsletter to let you all know what great things we have accomplished and what the future has in store for us in the coming months.

As you all know, we completed our NTC rotation that consisted of three force on force battles, three battalion live fires, three major movements for the battalion and eight days of stability and support operations that had us replicating the type of operations we will be doing in Iraq. All in all it was a very busy rotation. As I am fond of telling everyone who listens, this was the toughest of my seven rotations and the battalion did great. We got better at our jobs everyday which will be invaluable to us as we get ready to deploy to the real thing.

Additionally, both the CSM, the battalion S3, and myself have just

gotten back from eleven wonderful days in Kuwait and Iraq. We thought it was hot at NTC; in Kuwait and Iraq the temperature reached 117F in the shade everyday. I thought I was going to melt. During the trip we got to meet with the folks that would receive us into theater and the unit we are going to replace. We learned a lot about procedures required for us to be successful when we first arrive in theater and about the terrain we are going to occupy in Iraq. Although I can't talk much about the trip because of security requirements, I can tell you that



Rough Rider Logo painted on rock at N

the quality of life for your loved ones isn't going to be too bad. Here

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Rough Riders Family Readiness Group (RRFRG)

What is Family Readiness?

We focus on family readiness as a balance between three main areas: Preparation, Communication, and Education. Army Soldiers and families form the center of all FRG related events.

Why does the unit need FRGs?

For the family members: Unit FRGs foster a sense of belonging to the unit and community and provides a vehicle for families to de-



For the soldier: FRGs provide that communicates command. When the soldier trusts in that enables them to concentrate on mission at hand and have the tional readiness to carry out th sion. FRGs help develop a co in soldiers that family member receive reliable and friendly su when the soldier is away.

Who can be in the FRG?

Anybody! This includes married soldiers, single s

Alpha Company 'OUTLAWS'

NTC SUMMARY

Looking back on the National Training Center rotation 05-08, it was a bittersweet experience. From an operational stand point, the rotation was one of the toughest things Alpha Company has experienced. The op-tempo, mission requirements, shortage of personnel, and hot weather all contributed to providing the company with many very challenging and stressful days. From the training stand point, we learned many tactics, techniques, procedures and lessons that will make us more proficient at our mission in Iraq. The soldiers in A Company did an outstanding job and worked long and hard hours every day to complete the mission of supporting 2nd Brigade, as well as getting our equipment to and from Fort Irwin, CA. I am extremely proud of the effort made by every soldier and the families should be very proud

as well. My main goal of the rotation was to get the company and its equipment to NTC, train hard, and get everyone home safely to their families. This company accomplished that and did it in a way we can all be proud of.

Now that we have everyone and the majority of our equipment back on Fort Hood, the company is performing After Operations Maintenance (AOM) and recovery operations. We have been doing a variety of things to include: downloading vehicles off the trains at the railhead, washing vehicles at the



Neither rain, nor sleet, nor a little dust can slow down our

wash rack, cleaning weapons, night vision goggles, orders to get our vehicles working properly, writing awards, doing forms for max leave, and cleaning up the motor pool just to name a few of the tasks we have been doing for the past two weeks. These tasks are completed to ensure the company's

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The RST (Religious Support Team) prepares for

It was so good to get home, take a nice long shower, kiss the family and relax a little. I am actually glad I went to NTC for two reasons. First, I feel better prepared for Iraq and secondly, I was able to get to know many more soldiers in the 204th.

My Chaplain Assistant, PFC Joshuwa Clare was rewarded for his work in the desert with an NTC coin and a Certificate of Appreciation for his duty performance. Only a handful of Soldiers received this recognition. Those selected were also given the title of NTC Hero. Around 10 Soldiers in the 204 SB received this distinction during NTC.



CH(CPT) Leslie and PFC Clare

As we continually meet unique challenges and make new adjustments in our military lives, I hope that it drives us closer to God. A frequent source of strength for me in the desert was my daily time of prayer and scripture reading. Our

Lord Jesus Christ knew what the desert environment was like and so can we overcome it and so can we.

Over the next few months we will be tasked with more training and more requirements to fully get set for deployment. I am taking a Combat Lifesaver course and I look forward to it. I pray that no one gets seriously injured, but if it happens, I will be an additional source of support for my fellow Soldiers.

This is the time to draw strength from family, friends and God. The Lord Jesus Christ told us He will never leave us nor

HHC Paints the Rock at NTC & prepares for Deployment

The mighty Trail Blazers have finally returned from their very successful rotation to the National Training Center at Fort Irwin, California. It has been a very busy 30 days for HHC that required a lot of sweat and elbow grease to get the mission accomplished. First we had to upload the vehicles and containers on the train bound for NTC. Then, after a short plane ride to the desert, we had to send a few lucky soldiers out to Yermo, CA to down load the newly arrived equipment and shuttle it off to NTC via a 3 hour slow ride through the Mojave Desert.

After finally arriving in the Dust Bowl with all of our equipment and accompanying gear, we planned and prepared for the big move out



Soldiers posing with our painted rock include LT Ellis, Sgt Dukes, PFC Prymer and PVT Stanley. Good job Guys!

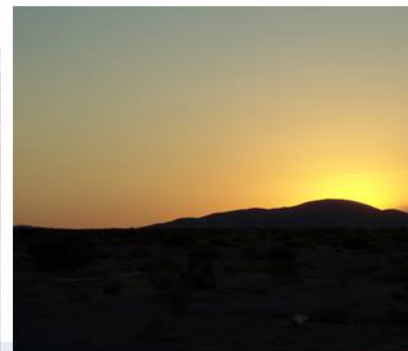
into the middle of the desert with all of our gear stowed and IBAS systems in place. Wearing your IBAS in the desert in August is like wearing a snowmobile suit to do PT in middle of August at Fort Hood. It brings a new meaning to forced

hydration. The IBAS brought challenges to the Trail Blazers but they worked hard to overcome the oppressive heat and were even identified as Outstanding Of The Battlefield for their outstanding performance.

Those identified as heroes in battle were PFC Moses, the cooks section, PFC Clay, the ministry support team, PFC Pettigrew from the supply section. These soldiers performed in an outstanding manner and our sincere thanks goes out to them for their effort during NTC rotation 08.

The return trip was just as busy as the departure. However, we did have an opportunity to leave our mark on the Irwin landscape. Four of our soldiers had the honor of painting the battalion crest on a large rock in an area known as Painted Rock. LT Ellis, with his crew of artists,

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More Pictures from our adventures at NTC



LT McDonald, Convoy Commander, preparing for our convoy which ended up lasting over 9 hours!



PFC Petigrew enjoying some time alone. Another 204th S selected as an NT



The 'Black Knights' lead by Example!

The Soldiers of Bravo Company, 204th Support Battalion fresh from the National Training Center (NTC) had spent the last month training and were prepared for anything. As the "Black Knights" (as the Soldiers of Bravo Company are known) made their way towards the large crowd, their pulse quickened and blood pressure increased. Fortunately, this was not another training event but instead a greatly appreciated welcome home celebration for the Soldiers. Family and friends of the Soldiers gathered at the battalion motor-pool as each flight returned home to Fort Hood. The Soldiers were able to enjoy a few minutes with their loved ones as they gathered



their belongings then headed off to spend some time with their families.

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Commander's Corner - Continued

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what they can expect at our operating base when they arrive in theater:

- Containers or nice tents to live in (both w/heat and air)
- Shower trailers
- Gym equipment (weights/cardio machines)
- Phone access
- Internet access
- Contracted Dining Facility
- Laundry
- Limited PX (we have to run it)

Overall it's not a bad setup. As we get closer to the deployment I will be allowed to share more info with everyone.

Presently we are knee deep in what is called recovery operations.

equipment off the rail head, clean it, inspect it, and fix it. This includes not only all our trucks and trailers but our weapons, masks, test sets, and digital equipment. We also inventory and restock all our supplies which includes soldiers' individual equipment. This whole process is very time consuming and labor intensive but the good news is after completion of recovery the unit begins maximum leave. The Brigade window for leave is from 27 August through 11 September. This is an opportunity for soldiers to take two weeks off prior to deployment. After this time period I can only authorize units to have 10% of their overall strength on leave at any given time. So if you want to take leave again prior to deployment coordinate now with your chain of command.

As for the future, our calendar is filling up fast. There are numerous mandatory training events that we must complete prior to deploying and some of our own that I want to rehearse again before we get into theater.

trained condition we can so ready to meet any challenge you are all saying "Great, we see my significant other?" Most to the unit has been that as work hard when we are at war ensure we get time off to enjoy families and friends prior to deployment. Some events we are enjoy ourselves are:

- Battalion Organizational Day
- Company Organizational Day
- Battalion Formal – beginning
- Three/Four day weekends

That's enough for now. Riders, enjoy your leave and all back after 11 September.

Rough Rider 6

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wives, husbands, and children but also extended family members such as mothers, fathers, aunts, uncles, grandparents, and siblings. Also included are those who are interested in the welfare of the soldiers: girlfriends, boyfriends, fiancées, retirees, etc.

Extend Your Family Through an FRG!

Find out about your FRG today and get involved in activities and planning.

Contact your Family Readiness Group Leaders to find out how you can help take care of families:

204 SB: Ms. Schultz

A Co: Mrs. Istre

B Co: Mrs. Cameron

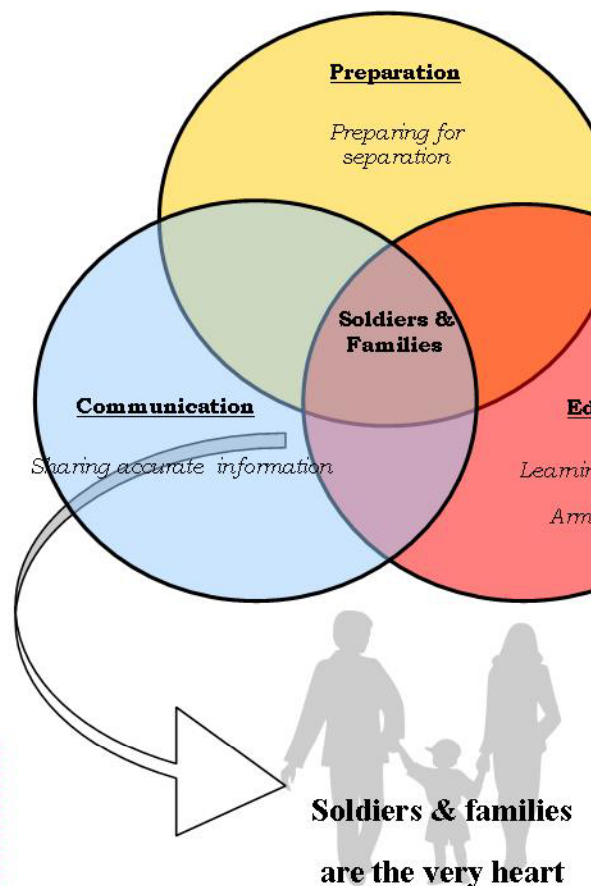
C Co: Mrs. Bentley

Message to FRGs

Your efforts support combat readiness.

Your experience will help others.

Your input is important.



FRG Highlights and Upcoming Events

October 2005: The 204 SB is getting its own virtual Family Readiness Group (vFRG) webpage! This site will allow us to post items of interest, such as photos, phone rosters, fundraising events, and much, much more! FRG members recently attended a vFRG workshop to learn how to setup our site. You will be able to link to it from the 204, 4ID website or go directly to it. Learn more about what the site will offer at: <http://www.armyfrg.org/skins/ArmyFRG/display.aspx>

The site is available to all DEERS members and AKO account holders. Best of all, soldiers can grant family members access to our vFRG site, simply by adding them as guests from their AKO account. Make sure your family has access before deployment. What a great way for extended family members and close friends to read and learn about all the great things you and our soldiers do every day!

Go to AKO at: <https://www.us.army.mil/slogin/welcome.html> and look for "New User" to create a guest account for your family members.

- ♦ August 2005 Rough Riders Newsletter is posted on the 4ID, 204 SB FRG link.
- ♦ Go to the 4ID homepage at: <http://www.hood.army.mil/4ID/> and follow the links for "UNITS", "2nd Brigade", "204th Support Battalion", "Family Readiness Group".

today! Your ideas and comments on how to improve and prove the battalion website for our soldiers and family members are encouraged. Please contact your FRG leader with your recommendations.

October 2005: Battalion Organizational Day is scheduled for OCTOBER

The Battalion FRG leaders are providing information packets at this event. The packets include phone trees, Rear Detachment information, and ways you can help us take care of our local and extended families through battalion activities, fundraisers, CARE Teams, committee positions, newsletters, and much more.

Archangels Conduct Recovery Operations

Hello family members and friends of Charlie Company, 204th Support Battalion. It's GREAT to be home! On behalf of the Archangel Officers, NCOs, and Soldiers, we want to thank all of you for your outstanding support and the wonderful welcome home. After spending a little over thirty days "conquering" the National Training Center, we're thankful to be home, happy to see your smiling faces, and proud to report "Mission Accomplished!"

Over the next few weeks, our focus will be on inventories, equipment and vehicle maintenance, and most importantly personal maintenance, as we take and enjoy some much needed leave. The primary leave period is from 27 Aug - 11 Sep, with the majority of the company taking leave during this timeframe. Some are taking longer leaves and some are taking shorter, but whatever the case might be, we hope that everyone will take pleasure in time spent with family and friends. Once we return from leave, the pace is going to pick up, once again, and we may have to work some late evenings as we prepare to deploy. We will continue to train hard but will also try to maximize our time off.

As of this moment, there are no major changes to our deployment schedule. The deployment window is still from mid to late November and the deployment will last



for one year. After which, we will return to rejoin our families. This is a crucial time in our Nation's history and along with our Nation's support...and our family's support...the Archangels will continue to do all that we can to ensure that our future and our history is bright.

Archangels, Rough Riders, Warhorse, Ironhorse



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OUTLAW Continued

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to do our mission again when its time to deploy overseas to Iraq.

The most rewarding thing we have been doing is spending time with family and friends again after 30 plus days of being away. A month of being away will certainly show a person what he or she takes for granted in everyday life. Simple things like walking on carpet in your bare feet, rolling over out of your own bed to go use your own bathroom, taking a shower in privacy and being clean, eating what you want out of your pantry, driving your car, watching TV, playing in your yard, listening to music. By far the most important thing though is spending quality time with your spouse, children, family and friends. We all missed our families while we were in the desert of California and I



hope that after a month away that the reunion of families and friends has been special for everyone.

The Brigade has granted us a max leave period to decompress, unwind and spend quality time with our families and friends for a couple of weeks. The majority of us are taking leave during 27 August to 11 September. This is our time to focus on families and enjoy the little things in life that we all

work for in the first place. I hope that every soldier will have a safe and enjoyable homecoming during their time off. Once we all leave, the focus of the company will shift to combat training. This immediately after we will be filled with weapons training, ranges, convoy training, digital training, combat saver training, and skills training. I find it a good sign that this company will receive quality training and will ensure we are ready to do our jobs in Iraq.

I would like to personally thank the soldiers of Alpha Company for making NTC a success and for the continuing support our families are giving to this mission. Enjoy your time off and keep us in mind.

'OUTLAW' Commander

Chaplain—Continued

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us.

It is such a privilege to be your chaplain. If I can be of any help to any Soldier or 204th family member, please contact me. If you just want someone to pray with, cry with, laugh with or talk with...I am here for you!

"Christ can give peace in any storm and give comfort during any trial we meet."



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HHC Continues it's Mission —

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lot of hard work into the task and turned out a pretty nice product. Our thanks goes out to Sgt Dukes, PFC Prymer, PVT Stanley, and 1LT Ellis for the hard work and dedication they displayed in creating their masterpiece.

The Trail Blazers have received all of their equipment back from NTC and are currently working feverishly to clean and store all of our gear so that we may go enjoy a much needed rest during the max leave period. We have a lot of hard work to do in order to get ready to deploy, so enjoy your time off and come back rejuvenated and ready to go.

We have a few upcoming events that we would like to address before signing off for this month.



in the interim
your calendar
line up the b
now so that
get together
some fun.

We hope that
Trail Blazers
enjoy their le
come back s
ready to get
about doing
training. We
lot of ranges
immediately
turning from
be prepared

The first is the Battalion Organizational Day in October. We are looking forward to a lot of fun, food and games with friends and family and some friendly competition between the companies to show who the best is. Of course HHC should clean up in the competition area as the majority of the talent within the battalion lies in HHC.

The other event we have to look forward to is the Battalion Formal which is going to be held in November. Details will become available as the time draws closer, but

right back into a high op
environment with a lot of
training designed to get u
for our upcoming deploy

'TRAILBLAZER' Comm



Do you know these Soldiers?





The 'BLACK KNIGHTS' — Continue training hard!

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But the time away passed by quickly and the Soldiers had to return to work in order to finish re-deploying the equipment from NTC. Once again the Soldiers gave 100%, working diligently day or night to get the equipment ready for the next mission. After the equipment arrived from NTC, it had to be downloaded, moved to the motor-pool, cleaned, inspected, and cleaned again. Additionally, the maintenance shops had to quickly re-establish themselves once their equipment arrived in order to provide support for the rest of the battalion and brigade. The company headquarters quickly setup shop in order to process awards and leave forms. The effort of the Soldiers was outstanding and with their hard work the company was quickly back to normal operations.

I would like to thank all the families that showed up for the company FRG meeting in August. It seems that each month we have a better turnout. During the meeting, we discussed some possible activities including our upcoming company organizational day at BLORA mid-September. We also talked

about some other possible events and fundraisers. All in all it was a successful meeting and I invite all families to come out for all company FRG events including our monthly meeting held the third Tuesday of every month.

Lastly, I would like to take the opportunity to wish all Soldiers a safe and happy block leave. A two week break is much deserved. The company has been working extremely hard for the last few months and now can enjoy some time with families and friends. I look forward to seeing everyone on the vacation and remind you to always think

'BLACK KNIGHT' Commander

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